



*Dorothy Taylor*

*Story of a Royal Canadian  
Air Force Veteran*

*of  
World War II*





## *Lest We Forget*

*Dorothy Taylor*

*Dorothy, a young 20 year old, joined the Royal Canadian Air Force to be part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War, a war which would change young lives forever.*

*Her father was deeply upset as he was afraid she might suffer, due to her German name, Schicks, but no mention was made of it during her time in the service. Her Mother was also upset because she was leaving home so young.*

*Dorothy remembers the pride she had in her blue uniform and how she detested those pink wool underpants that were "Air Force Issue".*

*Dorothy was assigned to the second Flight of Women's Division and did her Basic Training at Rockcliffe Station outside Ottawa. She remembers being homesick at times. The training was rigorous not only physically but academically with classroom studying and exams on general Air Force Administration. One of the hardest things for Dorothy while in training, was not being allowed off the station for at least the first two weeks.*

*Dorothy shares a funny story about the first evening she was allowed off the Station. She had been drilled to salute everything in brass and gold braid. She was walking down the street in Ottawa and noticed a gentleman dressed up in great regalia with gold tassels and a nice uniform. She automatically saluted. On walking further down the street, she heard snickers behind her and was informed she had just saluted the doorman of the hotel.*

*After Basic Training, Dorothy was posted to #4 Bombing and Gunnery School at Fingal, Ontario. She was one of the first squadron of girls to be posted to that station. She was classified as Air Women II Class and assigned to General Duties without much training. Dorothy was given the job of Station Librarian.*



Dorothy was transferred to Halifax Eastern Air Command and assigned as Fighter and Filter Operation Clerk which involved working on the Operations Board. She had not had any training for this but picked up the work very quickly and did her job to the best of her ability.

Another story Dorothy likes to share is about being appointed pianist in many USO shows playing to the troops. When a pianist was needed for a show anywhere, she was on call and transported to take part in the entertainment. On a particular Sunday afternoon, she was invited to visit a British ship to entertain. The ship was anchored three miles out and she was picked up by three young servicemen in a whaling boat and taken out to the ship in very rough and choppy water. It was February and very cold. She was dressed in her regular uniform and trench coat. Arriving at the ship, she was informed she would have to climb an icy chain ladder in order to get aboard. She says she will never forget that experience of climbing aboard the ice-covered ship with the sea below. She climbed that icy ladder with one hand, while trying to hold down her skirt with the other and the Navy officers telling her not to look down. So much for self-pride.

Another time she was sent to play at an event at a hostel. A Russian ship was in port and the crew was attending the show. They asked her to play "The Blue Danube". She did and when she was finished they all made a great rush for the piano. She was so nervous, she jumped up and ran off the stage scared half out of her wits. Later, she was informed they merely wanted her to play some more, as they greatly appreciated her music.

Dorothy shared one of the things that bothered her during her time in the RCAF. When the black servicemen were fighting or working on the ships, they were treated as equals with the white servicemen. But, the minute they were off duty, they were not allowed into the canteen to relax with their buddies and have a beer. She saw how unfair this was.

Dorothy knows her strong faith helped her through those war years.

Thank you, Dorothy, for your contribution and for giving our servicemen some cheer in a time of war.